

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1-8. (Canceled)

9. (Currently amended) A laminated piezoelectric element obtained by alternately laminating a plurality of piezoelectric layers and a plurality of internal electrode layers, said piezoelectric layers being constituted by the piezoelectric ceramic comprising a perovskite composite oxide of an  $ABO_3$  composition containing Pb in the A-site and Zr and Ti in the B-site, wherein when the total amount of the element species constituting the B-site of the perovskite composite oxide in the ceramic is set to be one mol, an average valency of the B-site is in a range of from 4.002 to 4.009, and being polarization-treated,

wherein the piezoelectric layers are treated in an electric field in a no-load state prior to being subjected to a polarization treatment, wherein the polarization treatment is conducted by locking the laminate in a direction in which it is to be compressed by applying a load, and thereby gaps are partly formed in the interface among the piezoelectric layers and the internal electrode layers.

10. (Canceled)

11. (Currently amended) A laminated piezoelectric element according to claim [[10]] 9, wherein said treatment in the electric field is conducted by the application of a DC voltage, an AC voltage or a pulse voltage of 20 to 200 V.

12. (Cancelled)

13. (Currently amended) A method of manufacturing a laminated piezoelectric element comprising:

preparing piezoelectric layers being constituted by a piezoelectric ceramic comprising a perovskite composite oxide of an  $ABO_3$  composition containing Pb in the A-site and Zr and Ti in the B-site, wherein when the total amount of the element species constituting the B-site of the perovskite composite oxide in the ceramic is set to be one mol, an average valency of the B-site is in a range of from 4.002 to 4.009;

laminating a plurality of the piezoelectric layers and a plurality of internal electrode layers alternatively; and

applying the piezoelectric layers to a polarization treatment, wherein the polarization treatment is conducted by locking the laminate in a direction in which it is to be compressed by applying a load;

treating the piezoelectric layers in an electric field in a no-load state prior to being subjected to the polarization treatment; and

forming gaps partly in the interface among the piezoelectric layers and the internal electrode layers.

14. (Canceled)

15. (Currently amended) A method of manufacturing a laminated piezoelectric element according to claim [[14]] 13, wherein said treatment in the electric field is conducted by the application of a DC voltage, an AC voltage or a pulse voltage of 20 to 200 V.

16. (Canceled)